

Public Works Committee
Meeting, 6/1/2010, Town Hall, 7:00
Draft Minutes

Present for the full meeting: Steve Braun (Chair), Mike Cann, Don George, Guilford Mooring (Superintendent, DPW), Charlie Moran, Vince O'Connor. Guests: Jason Venditti (UMass Facilities Planning), Joseph Wanat (VHB engineer), Christine Gray-Mullen.

Present at the Spring Street hearing only, these members of Town staff, Town boards, and the general public: A. Robert Hirschfeld, Christine Brestrup, Tom Dagherly, Diana Stein, Otto Stein, John Spinetti, Ann S. Lowell, Kathy Glime, Ruth Hazzard, Dave Ziomek.

1. Administrative

The minutes of May 4, 2010 meeting were: **Approved 4-0-1**, Don George abstaining because he was not at that meeting.

Next PWC meeting June 29, 7:00: Sand Hill Road hearing, discussion and vote on Spring Street.

2. Updates

Vince O'Connor: information from police dept. on effects/enforceability of "Thickly Settled" signs on "ladder" streets connecting Amity and Rt. 9. Not available at this time.

3. Old Business: Discussion and recommendations for Eastman Lane/North Pleasant St./Governor's Drive proposed intersection modifications.

Vince asks that comments be attached to any recommendation. Joe Wanat presents VHB's response to comments from the May 4 hearing and from comments sent to DPW during the comment period. [see attached memorandum from Joseph Wanat to Jason Venditti, dated May 26, 2010, and headed "N. Pleasant Street/Governors Drive/Eastman Lane Roundabout Plan Updates"]. Vince: raised crosswalks still too high. Vince wants sufficient width for bike lanes on N. pleasant and visible bike lanes on roundabout.

Moved: That the Public Works Committee recommends the roundabout plan option for the intersection of North Pleasant Street, Eastman Lane, and Governor's Drive. Data convincingly demonstrate that roundabouts such as the one proposed offer clear advantages of safety (for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians), efficiency (vehicle throughput), reduced environmental impact, and reduced maintenance and repair costs. The Committee makes its recommendation contingent upon several changes to the plan that were presented by project consultants at the June 1 meeting of the PWC [letter attached].
Voted 4-1.

4: New Business: Public hearing on paving work, sidewalk upgrades, parking lot changes and other issues in the vicinity of Spring Street and Churchill St.

Guilford Mooring presents the plan for the Spring Street Parking Lot. The through way has been narrowed to 28 feet to slow traffic. The project will tie together the downtown, and in particular S. Pleasant & Spring Streets, making for easier walking and consistent pavement/crosswalk design. There will be lights, benches, and a wider sidewalk on the north and south sides of the existing lot. The curb will be “mountable,” to accommodate the Farmers’ Market vehicles when the Market is open on its 31 Saturdays. The design shortens crossing time/space for all pedestrians. Guilford presents as well the plan for the redesign of Spring Street east of the parking lot running west to Churchill Street. At the Boltwood intersection, diagonal crossing for pedestrians will be possible. In addition, we will be replacing sewer, drain systems on the rest of Spring Street, making new connections for Lord Jeff and Grace Church. There will be a sewer and water stub at the graveled lot just south of Park House, in readiness for a new building there.

Rob Hirschfeld: is there two-way East-West traffic through the lot? Guilford Mooring: yes. RH: will there be handicap parking spaces? G: yes, at the east end of the lot, both north and south. Vince raised questions about grade and drainage on Spring Street east of the parking lot. G: there never has been a drainage system on the road. On the south (Jeff) side there will be new drains, new curb. On the north (Grace Church) side there will be a new sidewalk generally a few feet north of the existing sidewalk, then a wall to take care of the grade down to the road, where needed. Amherst College will install the sidewalk that borders their property.

Christine Brestrup: What materials on walls? G: granite.

Ruth Hazzard: voiced a concern about the proposed trees to the north and south of the Spring Street parking lot, thinking them too close to concrete and to pedestrian traffic. G: the tree warden has asked that the proposed trees be pushed away from the sidewalks and further into common.

John Spinetti: asked about the placement of benches on or near the sidewalk. G: not yet determined. Won’t affect Farmer’s Market in either case.

Tom Dagherty: asked that there be handicap parking on Boltwood or Spring Streets for parishioners, and that there be unloading space on Boltwood or Spring. G: that will be on Boltwood—not this project. Vince: suggests that Grace Church staff approach the Select Board for permission to block off a couple of spaces for loading/unloading on Sundays. Handicap parking spaces require free space on one side, not possible in a parallel-park site on a street, only available where they are now planned, in the Spring Street lot.

Diana Stein: concern about parking lot—Farmers’ Market brings lots of folks—and it’s already crowded. G: there should be the same room for people that there is now, given that the trucks will be parked partly on the new sidewalk.

Dave Ziomek: will the spaces in the lot be metered? G: we don’t know yet. DZ: moving trees good idea. Push them back on the common. DZ: the Town Manager and others are

concerned about the construction schedule in the Spring Street lot, and want to minimize disruption to the Farmers' Market.

Christine Brestrup, Planning: given that during the Farmers' Market trucks will park on new sidewalk bordering the lot, the travel width will be same.

John Spinetti: asked why the Spring Street lot will be closed to the Farmers' Market during 2011. Guilford Mooring and others responded: the construction site will not be a good place to have lots of people walking about, particularly during the kinds of rainy Saturdays we have been having. JS asked: "Please accommodate farmers for as long as possible." Vince: the Select Board controls use of Town ways. Work with the Select Board and the Superintendent—not PWC.

Rob Hirshfeld: metered parking a concern on church side of Spring Street. Is metered parking a foregone conclusion? For north side? Volunteers come in to work in the church during the week. G: still negotiable; depends on whether money can be found to put the utilities underground. If the power poles remain, spaces are more likely to be metered. If the utilities can be buried, the spaces may not be metered. Rob asked also about sewage backups at Park House, a perennial problem. G: Should be fixed with the new piping. Vince: Placement of parking meters is a Select Board function, and those concerned should apply to the Board. He also suggested that Grace Church ask the Select Board to permit the Church to establish a temporary Loading Zone on Boltwood Avenue, as needed.

Diana Stein: Back to the parking lot: if we install a mountable curb, will it be safe for pedestrians? G: it will be a 6" bump. Will be safe to walk on.

Steve Braun: who is paying for all this? G: for Spring Street, Chapter 90 + \$30,000 from the Town's capital budget. For the parking lot: \$80,000 from the parking fund, and the balance from Chapter 90. The Water and Sewer enterprise fund will pay for the related digging and piping, but not the repaving.

Dave Ziomek: regarding proposal to move the Farmers' Market in 2011—believes that the Town Manager is trying to propose a possible solution, but that he's open to other solutions.

Christine Brestrup: will the downtown pattern of sidewalk and crosswalk design be continued down Spring Street? G: yes—to Churchill.

Vince: in the parking lot: what would be width of disturbed area for new sewer, drainage? G: 5-10' trench line.

John Spinetti: paving blocks make it difficult for people with walkers, wheelchairs. G: the difficult ones, with the little domes on them, are required by state law. Pavers will be on the side, concrete elsewhere—as now in front of CVS, Zanna.

Steve: Are there ongoing plans for the stage area shown on the southwest corner of the parking lot? And if so, who will pay for the new structures? G: this is pie-in-sky. There is no money for a stage.

Dave Ziomek: there are many plans for the common and northern section of common. Both areas need lots of work.

Ruth Hazzard: The Farmers' Market site at present is too small, and the Market will outgrow the site. Where might it expand? Into some other part of this arrangement of streets? V: suggests parking lot north of common. Suggests that they work with the Select Board.

New Business: PWC Membership.

Steve Braun noted that three members' terms were expiring this year: his own, Rob Crowner's, and Vince O'Connor's. Vince noted that the Committee was, at six members, not now at full strength. Charlie Moran noted that the Town Bylaws stipulate that PWC should have five members only. Rob Crowner has indicated that with his membership on the Planning Board, he does not want to continue on PWC. The Committee therefore, now numbering six with three terms ending, will need to replace or continue two members to bring it to its full complement of five. Mike Cann, Don George, and Charlie Moran will continue on to complete their second terms in 2013.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Moran
Secretary pro tem

Attachments:

Memo from Joseph Wanat dated 5/26/2010
Spring Street diagrams;
SS Parking Lot diagrams;
Eastman/N. Pleasant Roundabout diagrams;